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Multiple Victimization in Canada, 2004

by Samuel Perreault, Julie Sauvé, and Mike Burns

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics
19th floor, R.H. Coats Building, Ottawa, K1A 0T6

Telephone: 613-951-9023 Toll-free: 1-800-387-2231

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Multiple Victimization in Canada, 2004

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Note of appreciation

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Preface

This series of profiles provides analysis on a variety of topics and issues concerning victimization, offending and public perceptions of crime and the justice system. The profiles primarily draw on results from the General Social Survey on Victimization. Where applicable, they also incorporate information from other data sources, such as the Census of Population and the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Examples of the topics explored through this series include: Victimization and offending in Canada's territories, Canadians' use of crime prevention measures and victimization of older Canadians. This is a unique periodical, of great interest to those who plan, establish, administer and evaluate justice programs and projects, or anyone who has an interest in Canada's justice system.

Table of contents

Highlights 6

Introduction 7

One third of victims of violent offences and one quarter of victims of property crimes are victims of multiple incidents 8

Victims of multiple incidents of violent victimization 9

Certain groups are at greater risk of being violently victimized 9
No one factor distinguishes multiple victimization from single victimization 11

Multiple incidents of household victimization 11

Quebec households experience fewer multiple victimizations 11
Residential neighbourhood characteristics influence the risk of multiple victimizations against the household 12
High-income households are more at risk of victimization 13

The perceptions of victims of multiple crimes 14

Victims of multiple crimes report higher levels of fear 14
Victims of multiple crimes report higher crime levels and social problems in their neighbourhoods 15
Police are viewed less favourably by victims of multiple crimes 15
Disruption of daily activities and health issues are more prevalent among victims of multiple crimes 15

Summary 16

Methodology 16

General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization 16
Data limitations 17

Bibliography 18

Endnotes 19

Appendix 20

Cumulative Index 21

Highlights

- In 2004, persons who reported having been the victim of more than one violent crime during the past year represented 2% of the population, but had experienced 60% of all violent crimes.
- Among those Canadians who reported having been victims of a crime in the 12 months preceding the survey, 38% said they had been victimized more than once. Of those, half were victimized twice while the other half were victimized three or more times.
- In 2004, young people, Aboriginals, single people, those involved in a large number of evening activities and who consumed alcohol more often were proportionally more likely to have reported being a victim of more than one violent crime.
- People who rented their home, lived in urban areas and resided in neighbourhoods with a higher proportion of single-parent families were more likely to be victims of a property crime more than once.
- While most Canadians, in 2004, reported being satisfied with their personal safety from crime, those reporting multiple victimizations expressed lower satisfaction with their safety compared to one-time victims and those that were not victimized in the 12 months preceding the survey.

Introduction

A large proportion of all victimization incidents are experienced by a relatively small number of victims who experienced multiple incidents. According to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, a little more than 10% of the population aged 15 and over were the victims of more than one crime during the 12 months preceding the survey, representing 60% of all criminal incidents. If one considers only violent crimes, 2% of the population accounted for 60% of all violent victimization reported to the GSS.

Given that a small proportion of individuals and households face a significant proportion of crimes, as a result determining which characteristics increases a person's risk of being victimized will help to improve the effectiveness of crime prevention measures, and perhaps help prevent further incidents of victimization.

Text box 1
Distinguishing between multiple and repeat victimization

Multiple and repeat victimization have been the subject of several studies and are sometimes defined in different ways. On several occasions the two terms have been interchanged and defined the same way (Farrell and Pease, 1993). However, repeat victimization can refer to a somewhat different experience. Multiple victimization, in general, is applicable to individuals who have been victims of crime on more than one occasion during a given period (DeValve, 2004). Multiple victimization can also be considered repeat victimization which is when an individual is the victim on more than one occasion, of the same type of crime committed by the same offender and in which the circumstances of the incident are similar (Outlaw, Ruback & Britt, 2002).

While repeat victimization may exhibit different characteristics and consequences for the victims than non-repeat multiple victimization, the low frequency of repeat victimization makes analysis difficult. As such, repeat victimization will be included under multiple victimization for this study.

Using data from the 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization, this profile will look at the prevalence of multiple victimization and the socio-demographic factors that may place people at higher risk of experiencing multiple victimizations.

The analysis will distinguish between violent victimizations directed at an individual (excluding spousal abuse) and household crimes that are non-violent in nature and are directed at property. As such, when analyzing violent multiple victimizations only victims of multiple violent crimes will be considered. Furthermore, the analysis of a specific crime type will focus on those who have been victims of that specific crime more than once. Otherwise, multiple victimization will include all those persons who were the victim of a crime on more than one occasion in the 12 months preceding the survey, where the crimes in question could be any crime included in the survey.

This profile will present a comparative analysis of persons who were victims of more than one crime and persons who were victims of only one crime during the 12 months prior to the survey. In addition, it will compare individuals who have been victims of a criminal act to those who have not been victimized. It will look at the differences in their perceptions of crime, social disorder and police performance as well as their fear of crime.

Among those Canadians who reported being victims of a crime during the 12 months preceding the 2004 survey, 38% said they had been victimized more than once. This pattern is similar to what was observed in the 1999 survey on victimization. Of those Canadians who reported that they were victimized more than once, half of them were victimized twice, while the other half were victimized three or more times.

Research to date has shown that not all people are equally at risk of being victims of crime. Some demographic groups are at greater risk of experiencing crime. The first section of this report examines those socio-demographic characteristics associated with a greater risk of experiencing multiple violent victimizations.

Similarly there are some household characteristics that place them at risk of being targets of household crime. For example, property crimes (i.e. crimes committed against households) such as break-ins, vehicle thefts,

vandalism and thefts of personal property are associated with the attractiveness of the home or property to the offender. These considerations will be discussed later in this article.

Text box 2
Types of offences

The 2004 General Social Survey (GSS) measured the extent of criminal victimization by looking at three types of violent crime, theft of personal property and four types of household property crime, according to their definitions in the *Criminal Code*.

When an incident included more than one type of crime, it was classified according to the most serious offence. The rank of offences from most to least serious is sexual assault, robbery, physical assault, break and enter, motor vehicle/ parts theft, theft of personal property, theft of household property and vandalism.

Violent offences:

Sexual assault: **Forced sexual activity, an attempt at forced sexual activity, or unwanted sexual touching, grabbing, kissing or fondling.**
Robbery: **Theft or attempted theft in which the perpetrator had a weapon or there was violence or the threat of violence against the victim.**
Assault: **An attack (victim hit, slapped, grabbed, knocked down or beaten), a face-to-face threat of physical harm, or an incident with a weapon present.**

Non violent offences:

Theft of personal property: **Theft or attempted theft of personal property such as money, credit cards, clothing, jewellery, a purse or a wallet (unlike robbery, the perpetrator does not confront the victim).**

Household offences:

Break and enter: **Illegal entry or attempted entry into a residence or other building on the victim's property.**
Motor vehicle/parts theft: **Theft or attempted theft of a car, truck, van, motorcycle, moped or other vehicle or part of a motor vehicle.**
Theft of household property: **Theft or attempted theft of household property such as liquor, bicycles, electronic equipment, tools or appliances.**
Vandalism: **Wilful damage of personal or household property, theft or attempted theft of personal property such as money, credit cards, clothing, jewellery, a purse or a wallet (unlike robbery, the perpetrator does not confront the victim).**

One third of victims of violent offences and one quarter of victims of property crimes are victims of multiple incidents[1,2]

Among the 5% of Canadians who reported being the victim of a violent offence during the year prior to the survey, one third (33%) indicated experiencing more than one violent incident during this period. As for the 19% of Canadians who were victims of a property crime, one quarter of them had their household victimized two or more times (Table 1).

Table 1
Types of crime experienced by victims, 2004

	Victimization frequency	
	Unique	Multiple
	percent	
Violent victimization	67	33
Sexual assault	63	37
Assault	74	26
Robbery	80	20
Household victimization	75	25
Break and enter	88	12
Motor vehicle theft	88	12
Theft of household property	85	15
Vandalism	83	17

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004

Victims of multiple incidents of violent victimization

Three out of five violent incidents (60%) were experienced by less than 2% of the population. Compared to other types of crime, sexual assaults are more often committed by someone known to the victim (Brennan and Taylor-Butts, 2008), which may place those victims at greater risk of multiple victimization (Lamn, 2005). For example, results from the survey found that over one third (37%) of sexual assault victims (which include forced sexual activity as well as unwanted sexual touching) reported being victimized more than once during the 12 months preceding the survey. Among those respondents that were victims of robbery, a smaller proportion of these victims (20%) reported being a victim of at least one other robbery during the past 12 months.

Women were more likely to have experienced more than one sexual assault than experiencing multiple victimizations of any other type of crime, with 7 women out of 1,000 reporting being sexually assaulted on multiple occasions during the previous 12 month period. For men, a larger proportion had been the victim of more than one assault, with 12 men out of 1,000 experiencing more than one assault during the previous 12 month period compared to 6 women out of 1,000.

Certain groups are at greater risk of being violently victimized[3]

Research results show that some individuals are more at risk of being victimized (Gannon and Mihorean, 2005; Menard, 2000). According to the GSS data, characteristics such as youth, being single, frequently going out in the evening, Aboriginal status and alcohol consumption are factors associated with a greater risk of victimization.

Table 2 provides a breakdown of several socio-demographic characteristics, and shows the proportion of persons who were not victimized or who were violently victimized once or multiple times.

For example, almost 10% of people aged 15 to 34 years reported being a victim of at least one violent crime and 3% indicated they had been victimized more than once, while this is the case for a smaller proportion of persons aged 35 to 54 (3.7% victimized and 1.2% victimized more than once). Similarly, single people are at greater risk of victimization, with 11% of single people being victims of at least one violent crime and 3.6% being victimized more than once, compared to 2.6% of people in a married or common-law union reporting being victimized at least once and 0.9% reporting more than one victimization.

Table 2
Characteristics of violent crime victims, by number of victimization incidents, 2004

	Number of victimizations		
	0	1	2 or more
	proportion of total population aged 15 and over		
Age			
15 to 34[1]	90.5	6.2	3.2
35 to 54	96.3*	2.5*	1.2*
55 and over	98.8*	F	F
Sex			
Male[1]	94.4	3.9	1.7
Female	95.7*	2.8*	1.6
Marital status			
Single[1]	89.2	7.3	3.6
Married/common-law	97.4*	1.7*	0.9*
Separated/divorced	94.0*	4.0*	2.0*
Widowed	98.6*	F	F
Main activity of respondent			
Working[1]	95.0	3.3	1.7
Student	89.3*	7.4*	3.3*
At home (includes household work, looking for a paid job, maternity/paternity leave, long-term illness)	95.7	2.8	1.5[E]
Retired	99.2*	F	F
Household income			
Under $15,000[1]	93.2	5.1	1.8[E]
$15,000 to $29,999	95.2*	3.1*	1.7[E]
$30,000 to $39,999	95.8*	2.9*	1.3[E]
$40,000 to $59,999	95.4*	3.5*	1.2
$60,000 to $99,999	95.5*	2.9*	1.6
$100,000 and over	94.7	3.0*	2.3
Location			
Urban[1]	94.7	3.6	1.7
Rural	96.4*	2.4*	1.2
Number of activities at night (each month)			
Less than 10[1]	98.2	1.4	0.4[E]
10 to 19	96.6*	2.5*	0.9*[E]
20 to 29	95.1*	3.3*	1.7*
30 to 49	93.0*	4.5*	2.5*
50 or more	88.7*	7.0*	4.3*
5 or more drinks on the same occasion in the past month			
Never drinks or never drank in the past month[1]	96.1	2.7	1.2
Drank in the past month, but never 5 or more drinks	96.7	2.3	1.1
1 to 4 times	91.3*	5.6*	3.2*
5 times or more	88.4*	8.2*	3.4*[E]
Activity limitation			
No limitation[1]	95.1	3.3	1.6
Limitation	94.2*	3.5	2.3*
Aboriginal status			
Aboriginal[1]	87.5	7.9	4.7[E]
Non-Aboriginal	95.2*	3.2*	1.6*

* Significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)
[E] use with caution
F too unreliable to be published
1. Reference category.
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

No one factor distinguishes multiple victimization from single victimization

Even if certain socio-demographic characteristics are associated with victimization, it seems less evident that these characteristics are associated with a greater risk of being a victim multiple times. In effect, for each of the characteristics presented in Table 2, between 25% to 40% of victims had been victims of multiple violent incidents.

Due to the fact that Table 2 presents each characteristic independently from the others, a multivariate analysis was conducted to see if, when all the factors are taken into consideration, certain characteristics had an influence on multiple victimization.

A logistic regression was conducted to compare persons who had been victims of a violent crime only once during the 12 months preceding the survey to those who had been victims more than once. When all the factors were kept constant, no characteristic was significant. These results indicate that the risk factors for multiple victimization are the same as for victimization in general. In brief, if a person is at greater risk of being a victim of a crime, that person will, in the same way, be at greater risk of being victimized multiple times.

In fact, considering that 5% of the population reported being the victim of a violent crime, and a third of these had been victimized more than once, the best predictor of multiple victimization is being a victim the first time.

Text box 3
Spousal violence and stalking are not always isolated events

In addition to measuring the nature and extent of criminal victimization, the GSS measured the prevalence of spousal violence and stalking through separate modules.

Results from the 2004 survey revealed that in the majority of violent spousal relationships, the violence was not an isolated incident. Over half (54%) of those who self-reported spousal violence in a current or previous relationship had experienced violence on more than one occasion over the past five years.

Women were more likely to have experienced repeated violence than men (57% versus 49%) and were also more likely to report that they had been the targets of more than 10 violent incidents at the hands of their partner[4] (21% versus 11%).[5]

The survey also revealed that victims of multiple incidents of spousal violence had a higher prevalence of stalking than one-time victims and non-victims over the course of the five years leading up to the 2004 survey. In fact, 26% of those who reported multiple incidents of spousal violence also reported stalking incidents compared to 13% of one-time victims and 6% of non-victims.[6]

Multiple incidents of household victimization

The risk factors associated with household victimization differ from those identified for victims of violent offences. While violent crimes are analysed by socio-demographic characteristics of the victim, the analytical perspective is different when considering property crimes. Property crimes such as break and enter, vehicle thefts and vandalism are associated with the attractiveness of the household or property to the offender, particularly the location of the residence (urban or rural area), type of dwelling, home ownership or rental, household income and household size (Gannon and Mihorean, 2005) (Table 3). In Table 3, these characteristics are presented, as well as the corresponding proportion of households that were victimized.

Quebec households experience fewer multiple victimizations

In 2004, a larger proportion of households in the Prairies and British Columbia recorded property related victimization. Furthermore, these provinces also had the highest percentage of multiple property victimizations. Roughly one third households that were victimized were victimized more than once. Police data also showed that the Western provinces had the highest rates of property crimes in 2004 (Sauvé, 2005). Multiple household victimizations were less frequent in Quebec as well as in the Atlantic provinces. In Quebec, among the households that were victimized, 13% were victimized more than once.

Residential neighbourhood characteristics influence the risk of multiple victimizations against the household

Several neighbourhood characteristics were associated with a greater risk of households experiencing multiple property related incidents. For example, households were more likely to be victimized more than once during the 12 months prior to the survey in urban areas and in neighbourhoods where the proportion of single-parent families was higher or where the proportion of persons in families with incomes below the low-income cut-off (LICO) was higher.

Among those households located in neighbourhoods where the proportion of single-parent families was higher and that had been victims of a property crime during the 12 months prior to the survey, 28% had been victimized at least twice. Essentially the same percentage of victimized households located in neighbourhoods where the proportion of persons living in families with an income below the LICO was high had experienced multiple property victimizations.

Table 3
Household characteristics, by number of victimizations, 2004

	Number of victimizations		
	0	1	2 or more
	proportion of households		
Region			
Atlantic	86.6	10.0	3.4*
Quebec[1]	87.5	10.9	1.6
Ontario	83.1*	12.7*	4.2*
Prairies	76.7*	15.7*	7.6*
British-Columbia	75.8*	16.1*	8.2*
Household income			
Under $15,000[1]	88.8	7.9	3.3
$15,000 to $29,999	84.4*	11.6*	4.0
$30,000 to $39,999	83.4*	11.2*	5.4*
$40,000 to $59,999	81.1*	14.2*	4.8*
$60,000 to $99,999	78.9*	15.7*	5.4*
$100,000 and over	76.7*	17.8*	5.6*
Tenure			
Owner[1]	82.7	13.0	4.4
Tenant	81.6	13.3	5.1*
Dwelling type			
Semi-detached, row house or duplex[1]	79.0	14.4	6.6
Single-detached house	82.3*	13.1	4.5*
Apartment	84.2*	12.2*	3.6*
Household size			
1 person[1]	87.0	9.9	3.1
2 persons	84.4*	11.7*	3.9*
3 persons	78.8*	14.9*	6.3*
4 persons or more	76.8*	17.2*	6.0*
Location			
Urban[1]	81.2	13.7	5.1
Rural	87.2*	10.5*	2.4*
Proportion of persons in families with incomes below the low-income cut-off (LICO) in the neighbourhood*[2,3]			
Low[1]	84.6	11.8	3.6
Medium	81.7*	13.4*	4.9*
High	80.8*	13.9*	5.3*

See notes at the end of the table.

Table 3 (continued)
Household characteristics, by number of victimizations, 2004

	Number of victimizations		
	0	1	2 or more
	proportion of households		
Proportion of lone parent families in the neighbourhood[4]			
Low[1]	85.3	11.5	3.2
Medium	82.6*	12.9*	4.5*
High	79.8*	14.5*	5.7*
Proportion of persons in the neighbourhood who lived at the same address 5 years earlier[5]			
High[1]	86.1	11.1	2.9
Medium	80.4*	14.0*	5.6*
Low	80.8*	14.4*	4.8*
Median family income in the neighbourhood			
Less than $30,000[1]	82.0	13.1	4.9
$30,000 and over	82.7	13.0	4.3*
Main activity of respondent			
Student[1]	75.2	17.9	6.9
Working	79.7*	15.0*	5.3*
At home (includes household work, looking for a paid job, maternity/paternity leave, long-term illness)	82.7*	12.4*	4.9*
Retired	92.1*	6.2*	1.7*
Number of activities at night (each month)			
Less than 10[1]	90.0	7.8	2.2
10 to 19	82.9*	13.2*	4.0*
20 to 29	80.0*	15.2*	4.8*
30 to 49	77.7*	15.7*	6.5*
50 or more	74.5*	17.3*	8.2*

* Significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)
1. Reference category.
2. Less than 10% of families in the neighbourhood (low), between 10% and 75% of families in the neighbourhood (medium), over 75% of families in the neighbourhood (high).
3. Neighbourhood characteristics are derived at the Census tract level in cities with a population above 50,000 (CA and CMA) and at the city level for cities with a population under 50,000.
4. Less than 25% of families in the neighbourhood (low), between 25% and 75% of families in the neighbourhood (medium), over 75% of families in the neighbourhood (high).
5. Less than 40% of persons in the neighbourhood who lived at the same address 5 years earlier (low), between 40% and 65% of persons in the neighbourhood who lived at the same address 5 years earlier (medium), over 65% % of persons in the neighbourhood who lived at the same address 5 years earlier (high).
Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

High-income households are more at risk of victimization

Household income can be an indicator of the quantity and value of the goods in a residence, making the potential financial gain from these households more attractive to offenders (Taylor-Butts, 2009). Thus, the percentage of households victimized increased with household income. Nearly one in four households with a income above $100,000 experienced a property crime and nearly 6% were victimized more than once during the past 12 months. In comparison a smaller proportion of households with incomes below $15,000 reported at least one property crime (8%) and 3% reported more than one property crime incident. However, even if a greater proportion of households with an income above $100,000 were victims of multiple property crimes compared to households with an income below $15,000, once victimized, the latter were more at risk of being victimized again. Nearly 30% of households with an income below $15,000 that were victimized were victimized more than once, compared to 24% of households with an income above $100,000.

A multivariate analysis was conducted to determine which risk factors were the most significant among those households that experienced multiple victimizations. In contrast to the results for violent victimization, it appears that certain factors increases the risk of a household being victimized multiple times rather than once. The household's location, income, type of dwelling and the proportion of people living in low-income families in the neighbourhood are all predictors of household multiple victimization. Households in the Prairies and in British

Columbia were 3 times more likely than households in Quebec to experience multiple property crimes (Table 4 in the appendix). Moreover, the multivariate analysis revealed that, although a greater proportion of households with incomes above $100,000 were victimized more than once, households with incomes below $50,000, when victimized, were more at risk of being victimized again.

The perceptions of victims of multiple crimes

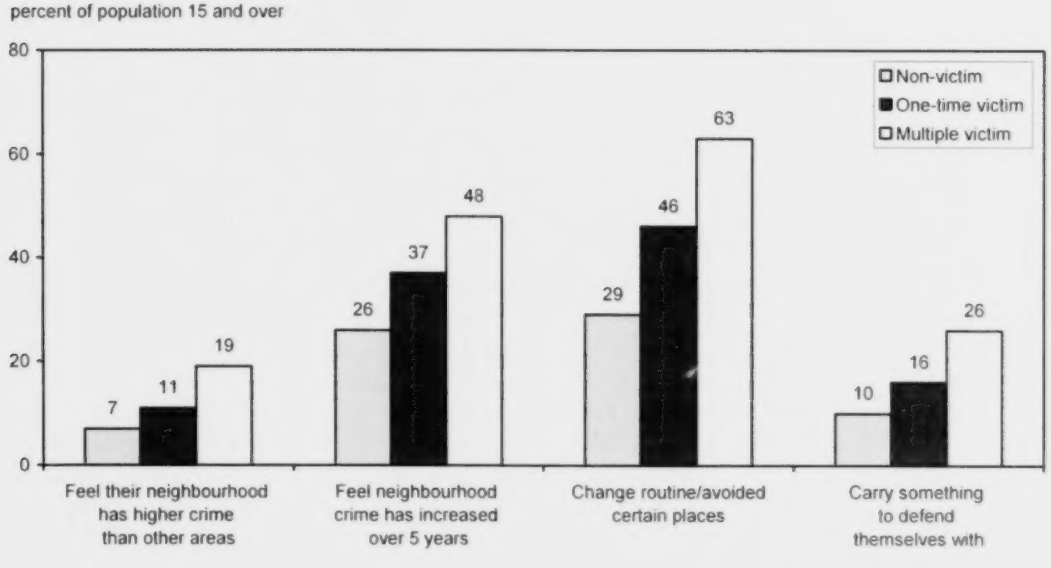
The impacts of multiple victimization on victims go well beyond the physical injuries and/or financial losses they may have incurred. Being a victim of a crime can lead a person to doubt their safety, and the safety of his/her environment (AuCoin and Beauchamp, 2007). Also, people who have been victims of a crime are more likely than those who have not been victims to have used crime prevention measures. The use of crime prevention strategies increased with the number of victimization incidents (Gannon and Taylor-Butts, 2006).

Victims of multiple crimes report higher levels of fear

While most Canadians were satisfied with their personal safety from crime, persons reporting having been victimized multiple times expressed lower satisfaction with his/her safety (87% satisfied) compared to people who reported being victimized once (93%) and non-victims (95%). Respondents who were victims of multiple crimes also reported lower levels of safety in specific situations such as walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood, waiting for public transportation and staying home alone in the evening or at night.

Previous research has suggested that a person's experience as a victim may increase their use of various crime prevention strategies (Miethe, 1995; Gannon and Taylor-Butts, 2006). In 2004, victims of multiple crimes reported having taken various measures to protect themselves from crime more often than one-time and non-victims. For instance, victims of multiple crimes (63%) were more likely than one-time victims (46%) and non-victims (29%) to have changed their activities, routine or avoided certain places to protect themselves from crime in the year leading up to the survey (Chart 1). Twenty-six percent (26%) of victims of multiple crimes also stated that they carried something to defend themselves or to alert other people in order to make themselves feel safer compared to 16% of those who were victimized once and 10% who were not victimized.

Chart 1
Perception of neighbourhood crime and the behaviour of crime victims

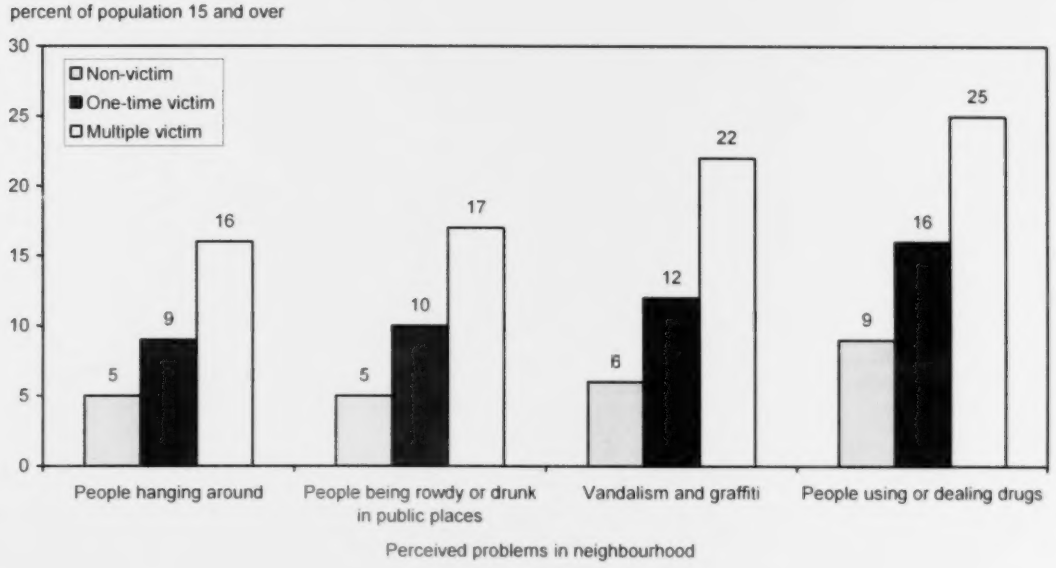


Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Victims of multiple crimes report higher crime levels and social problems in their neighbourhoods

Research has found that multiple victimizations occur most often in areas of high crime (Pease and Laycock, 1999). Compared to one-time victims and non-victims, victims of multiple crimes were more likely to say that crime levels in their neighbourhoods were higher than elsewhere (Chart 1). They also reported higher levels of neighbourhood problems such as vandalism, graffiti and drugs (Chart 2).

Chart 2
Victims' perceptions of neighbourhood problems



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

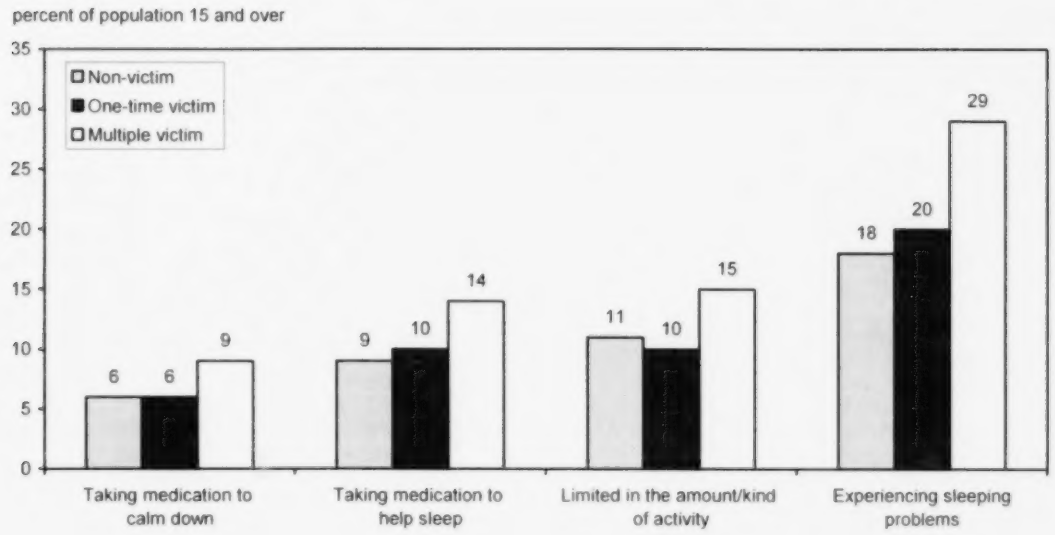
Police are viewed less favourably by victims of multiple crimes

Victims of multiple crimes were less likely than were one-time victims and non-victims to feel that police were doing a good job in most aspects of their work, including responding quickly to calls, treating people fairly and ensuring public safety. For example, a smaller proportion (42%) of victims of multiple crimes felt their local police were doing a good job at enforcing the law, compared to one-time victims (54%) and non-victims (63%). Similar research in the United States found that victims of crime, especially those who had been victimized more than once, felt less confident in the ability of the police to meet the needs of citizens in both protecting the public and treating people fairly, thus contributing to their overall level of dissatisfaction with the police (DeValve, 2004).

Disruption of daily activities and health issues are more prevalent among victims of multiple crimes

While the survey was not able to measure whether their victimization directly affected various aspects of their health, a larger proportion of victims of multiple crimes reported experiencing sleeping problems[7] and taking medications to help them sleep and to calm down (Chart 3). These results are supported by other research which found that being the victim of a crime can limit activities and often aggravate health problems, including insomnia and anxiety (Norris et al., 1997; AuCoin and Beauchamp, 2007).

Chart 3
Health issues and victimization



Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Summary

Certain individuals are more vulnerable to violent victimization. In 2004, 5% of the Canadian population aged 15 and over reported having been the victim of a violent incident, but one third of these had been victims more than once. However, no factors seem to explain why certain individuals are more likely than others to be victims multiple times rather than only once.

Certain households possess characteristics that make them vulnerable to victimization. In contrast to violent victimization, certain characteristics can increase the risk of a household being victimized multiple times rather than once. Households with incomes below $50,000 living in semi-detached or duplex, residing in neighbourhoods where the percentage of persons living in low-income families was higher or living in the Prairies were more likely, if victimized, to be victimized several times.

The impacts on individuals who reported being victims of multiple crimes during the 12 months prior to the GSS were numerous. Compared to victims of one crime incident, those that experienced multiple crimes were less satisfied with their personal safety and thought that the crime rate in their neighbourhood was higher than in other neighbourhoods. They were also more likely to use crime prevention measures.

Methodology

General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization

In 2004, Statistics Canada conducted the victimization cycle of the GSS for the fourth time. Previous cycles were conducted in 1988, 1993 and 1999. The objectives of the survey are to provide estimates of the extent to which people experience incidences of eight offence types (see text box 1); to examine risk factors associated with victimization; to examine rates of reporting victimization to police; and to measure fear of crime and public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system.

Households in the 10 provinces were selected using Random Digit Dialling. Once a household was chosen, an individual 15 years or older was selected randomly to respond to the survey. Households without telephones, households with only cellular phone service as well as individuals living in institutions were excluded. These groups combined represented 4% of the target population. This figure is not large enough to significantly change the survey results.

The sample size in 2004 was about 24,000 households, similar to the sample size in 1999 (26,000) and considerably higher than the sample in 1993 and 1988 (10,000 each). Of the 31,895 households that were selected for the 2004 GSS sample, 23,766 useable responses were obtained.

Data limitations

The data that appear in this profile are based on estimates from a sample of the Canadian population and are therefore subject to sampling error. Sampling error refers to the difference between an estimate derived from the sample and the one that would have been obtained from collecting data from every person in the population.

This profile uses the coefficient of variation (CV) as a measure of the sampling error. Any estimate that has a high CV (over 33.3%) has not been published because the estimate is too unreliable. An estimate that has a CV between 16.6 and 33.3 should be used with caution. The symbol 'E' is used to identify these estimates.

When comparing estimates for significant differences, the hypothesis that the difference between two estimates is zero is tested. A 95% confidence interval is then constructed around this difference and if this interval contains zero, then we conclude that the difference is not significant. If, however, this confidence interval does not contain zero, one can conclude that there is a significant difference between the two estimates.

In addition to sampling error, non-sampling errors may have been introduced. Types of non-sampling errors include the refusal by a respondent to report, a respondent's inability to remember or report events accurately, or errors in coding and processing of the data. In addition, individuals who could not speak English or French well enough to complete the survey were not included.

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Endnotes

1. Unless otherwise stated, the differences reported in this profile are statistically significant. For more information, see the "Methodology" section.
2. Incidences of sexual assault and assault committed by the spouse, common-law partner, ex-spouse or ex-partner are excluded from this analysis.
3. Incidences of sexual assault and assault committed by the spouse, common-law partner, ex-spouse or ex-partner are excluded from this analysis.
4. Includes both current and previous partners/spouses.
5. *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005*, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.
6. Even though stalking is considered a *Criminal Code* offence, a 'non-victim' is someone who has not experienced at least one of the *Criminal Code* offences as defined in Text box 1 over the preceding 12-month period.
7. In the GSS, victims are not asked if the sleeping problems are associated with their victimization.

Appendix

Table 4
Factors associated with greater risk of household multiple victimization, multivariate analysis, 2004

Factors	Odds ratio[1]
Household income	
Below $50,000	1.33**
$50,000 and over	Reference category
Region	
Atlantic	2.19***
Quebec	Reference category
Ontario	1.99***
Prairies	3.48***
British Columbia	3.19***
Perception of crime level in the neighbourhood compared to 5 years earlier	
Increased	1.63***
Decreased/about the same	Reference category
Number of activities at night (each month)	
30 to 49	1.40**
50 or more	1.65***
Less than 30	Reference category
Dwelling type	
Semi-detached, row house, duplex	1.40**
Single-detached or apartment	Reference category
Location	
Urban	1.44*
Rural	Reference category
Proportion of households living at the same address 5 years earlier	
Medium	1.32**
Low or high	Reference category

* $.01 < p < or = .05$
** $.001 < p < or = .01$
*** $p < or = .001$

1. Indicates the odds of being victimized in comparison to that for the reference category, when all other factors in the model are held constant. Values near 1 imply that there is little or no relationship between a specific characteristic and the risk of victimization. Values under 1 imply that those in the group being considered are less likely to be victimized than those in the reference group. Values greater than 1 implies those in the group being considered are more likely to be victimized than those in the reference category. An odds ratio is used to assess whether specific categories are more or less likely to be victimized than those in the reference category (equal to 1). For example, a value of 3 implies that a person with that specific characteristic is three times more likely to be victimized than those in the reference category.

Note: p is the significant level. For example, a significance level of .05 indicates that there is a 5% probability that the survey (sample) data will suggest that there is a relationship between the variables, when no relationship actually exists in the population. Using the technique of multilevel logistic regression, the relationship of each factor to the risk of victimization is examined, while controlling for possible interactions with other risk factors in the model.

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2004.

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics Profile Series
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2009

Multiple victimization in Canada, 2004
Criminal victimization and health: A profile of victimization among persons with activity limitations or other health problems
Household income and victimization in Canada, 2004

2008

Sexual assault in Canada
Immigrants and victimization
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Sexual orientation and victimization
Visible minorities and victimization

2007

Seniors as victims of crime
Criminal victimization in the workplace

2006

Canadians' use of crime prevention measures
Victimization and offending in Canada's territories

2001

Aboriginal people in Canada
Canadians with disabilities
Canadians with literacy problems
Canadians with low incomes
Children and youth in Canada
Immigrants in Canada
Religious groups in Canada
Seniors in Canada
Visible minorities in Canada
Women in Canada